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SUBJECT: CANADA STRONGLY CONDEMNS DPRK MISSILE TEST

REF: STATE 33031

¶1. (SBU) Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) North Asia Deputy Director Karine Asselin told poloff on April 6 that Canada agrees with the U.S. on the seriousness of the situation after the weekend DPRK missile test launch. Despite the apparent failure of the test, Asselin added that Minister Cannon wanted a "quick and vigorous" Canadian response. She said he made a point of issuing a strong statement (para two) on Sunday immediately after news of the test launch broke. DFAIT Korea Desk Officer Brian Shipley said Canada remains seized with the issue at the United Nations, and appreciates the close coordination between the U.S. and Canada in New York and Seoul on DPRK issues.

¶2. (U) Begin text of Foreign Minister Cannon's statement:

April 5, 2009

The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, today expressed serious concerns regarding North Korea's use of a long-range rocket in the attempted launch of a satellite on April 5.

"Canada is very concerned by North Korea's decision to launch a long-range rocket," said Minister Cannon. "This ill-advised action undermines confidence in North Korea's commitment to peace and security."

Although the North Korean government claims that the launch was for space development purposes, it was based on military technology and will benefit North Korea's ballistic missile program. Such activities are prohibited under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718 (2006).

"Canada calls upon North Korea to comply fully with the requirements in UNSCR 1718 and suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile program. The international community must also remain vigilant to prevent exports of nuclear and missile-related goods and technology to North Korea," added Minister Cannon.

In 1998, North Korea attempted to launch a satellite on an earlier version on its long-range rocket, but it failed to reach orbit. Another long-range missile was tested in 2006, but broke up shortly after launch. UN Security Council resolutions 1695 and 1718 subsequently imposed sanctions against North Korea and demanded that it end its programs related to ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

North Korea's latest action is particularly disappointing, given the progress on denuclearization within the Six-Party Talks over the last two years. Rather than taking actions that increase regional tensions, North Korea should seek a path that will lead to lasting peace on the Korean peninsula and major improvements in the lives of the North Korean people," Minister Cannon said.

"We strongly urge the North Korean government to live up to its stated desire for positive relations with the international community to accept the obligations of peaceful and responsible behaviour that are incumbent upon it as a member of the United Nations." End text

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